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August 5, 2010

CARDIN, MIKULSKI PRAISE RECOVERY ACT FUNDING FOR LONAONING WATER PROJECT

Project will Upgrade Water Supply, Ensure Safe Drinking Water

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators **Benjamin L. Cardin** and **Barbara A. Mikulski** (both D-MD) today praised the announcement by the U.S. Department of Agriculture that the Town of Lonaconing, in Allegany County, has been awarded a \$6.6 million loan and \$2.3 million grant in ***American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*** funds to upgrade water supply distribution facilities.

“The safety and reliability of our communities’ water supply is critically important. Rural communities often lack the resources needed to undertake necessary infrastructure improvements. With the deterioration of the Koontz Dam, Lonaconing faces a serious threat to its water distribution system. This federal funding will make it possible for Lonaconing to move forward with important upgrades to ensure the safety and security of its water supply. This project will also provide important jobs for Allegany County residents as it moves forward,” said **Senator Cardin**, chairman of the Wildlife and Water Subcommittee of the Environment and Public Works Committee.

“Improving Lonaconing’s water distribution system is essential in making the city’s water safe for its residents to drink and in creating jobs in Allegany County,” **Senator Mikulski** said. “These federal funds will help take the burden off local taxpayers in these tough economic times. I will continue to fight to put funds in the federal checkbook for important projects like this.”

An inspection by the Maryland Department of Environment identified Koontz Dam as being in poor condition. This Recovery Act funded project will supply two water storage tanks that will effectively replace the Koontz Dam storage, helping alleviate pressure and improve the safety of the dam. The project also includes replacing security fencing, monitoring equipment, meters and generators. The replacement of 450 manual/touch read meters with radio read transmitters will reduce the manpower needed by the town to complete billing. The generators will allow the town to have backup power at the two water treatment plants. This project will serve the existing 1,744 customers and an additional 15 customers in the service area.

Today's USDA announcement included \$157.3 million Recovery Act funding for 34 projects nationwide that will improve water and wastewater infrastructure in rural communities.

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